

ROY COOPER

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NORTH CAROLINA
Environmental Quality

NARRATIVE

1.0 PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION AND PLANS FOR REVITALIZATION

1.a. Target Area and Brownfields

Three target areas across the State of North Carolina have been selected based upon community need. As you will see, many of these regions have suffered from the unequal growth rate that North Carolina has experienced. Although 5 priority sites are already identified herein, our community partners continue to identify others to achieve our overall site assessment goals.

1.a.i. Background and Description of Target Area

Target Area 1: Central Appalachian Region:

This Region consists of 31 of the westernmost counties within the state (of which 12 counties are metropolitan statistical areas) that have been subject to longstanding educational and cultural inequities¹. Including this Region will foster awareness and understanding of the cultural significance of these areas, while also providing economic benefits. Two of our Priority Sites (PS), the Nikwasi Cultural Corridor (PS1) and Smoot Tannery (PS2), are located within this Target Area.

Target Area 2: Northeast Coastal Plain

The 19 counties of the Northeast Coastal Plain (of which 8 counties are metropolitan statistical areas) have faced a near constant struggle with economic viability and climate resiliency. Disadvantaged, rural, communities adjacent to flood-prone rivers and estuaries are vulnerable to increasingly intense weather events. Five counties are statistically recognized to be in persistent poverty¹. Past segregationist policies have caused a higher percentage of African Americans to be living in distressed areas. Partnering with communities in this region will help address Environmental Justice issues, increase climate resiliency with smart growth, and build investment in regional infrastructure. Two of our Priority Sites, Beaufort Marine Park (PS3) and the Wooten Property (PS4), are within this Target Area.

Target Area 3: Lumber River Basin

The 10 counties of south-central portion of the State within the Lumber River Basin (of which 3 counties are metropolitan statistical areas) face challenges with economically disadvantaged communities, inadequate infrastructure, and coastal resiliency in part due to increasingly damaging hurricane seasons in areas vulnerable to flooding, including three persistent poverty counties². This area also spans the homeland of the Lumbee Tribe, territory for which includes Robeson, Scotland, Hoke and Cumberland Counties. The Lumbee Tribe is State recognized, though not yet federally recognized, and is not eligible to apply for these funds. A Priority Site in Target Area 3 is the Pembroke Bulk Oil Plant (PS5) in the Town of Pembroke.

1.a.ii. Description of the Priority Brownfield Sites

Priority Site (PS) 1 Nikwasi Cultural Corridor: The lack of educational awareness regarding the plight of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians (ECBI) continues to burden this culturally rich area. One example is the Nikwasi Cultural Corridor in Franklin, a town of 3,845 residents.

¹Smith, Author Evan. "Human Rights in the Appalachian Region of the United States of America: An Introduction." *UAB Institute for Human Rights Blog*, 9 Oct. 2020, <https://sites.uab.edu/humanrights/2020/10/13/human-rights-in-the-appalachian-region-of-the-united-states-of-america-an-introduction/>

² Columbus, Bladen, and Robeson Counties. Congressional Research Service, *The 10-20-30 Provision: Defining Persistent Poverty Counties* (February 24, 2021), 17. <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/R45100.pdf>



Nikwasi is one of the oldest towns of the EBCI and atop the Nikwasi Mound (524 E. Main St.) was the meeting house for the community. Two former bulk oil distribution facilities are in the immediate vicinity of the Nikwasi Mound. Additional nearby parcels that are key for site access and connection to the local greenway trail will need further assessment. These parcels will form an integral part of a planned cultural corridor that celebrates the history of the Nikwasi Mound and the ECBI. Environmental assessments are necessary to outline impact and risk to ease liability concerns for expansion of the cultural corridor.

PS2 Smoot Tannery: The Town of North Wilkesboro is located within the Appalachian Region with a population of 4,245 residents. Despite being the “Key to the Blue Ridge”, the Town has been unable to significantly benefit from tourism revenue to the Region. Town management has identified the former Smoot Tannery (127 Maple St.) adjacent to the Yadkin River, River Greenway municipal wastewater treatment plant (WWTP), and Smoot Park as prime for revitalization, aesthetic enhancement, and increasing recreational opportunities or municipal infrastructure in the community. The Tannery operated from the late 1800s and is visible from many prominent locations within the community. Once a productive employer, the property has since deteriorated into a visual blight and safety concern for the Town. The Town plans to purchase the property, remove the dilapidated buildings, and repurpose the land for community benefit; none of which can be done without environmental assessment.

PS3 Beaufort Marine Park: This part of eastern North Carolina is home to towns steeped in American history that are suffering from lack of investment. Among these is the Town of Belhaven along the Pungo River. In recent decades, Belhaven has experienced a steady decline in population due to waning fishing and logging resources as its main industries, the 2008 economic recession, and the closing of Pungo Hospital in 2012. At the Town’s gateway on Hwy 99 and West Main Street is a 32-acre vacant parcel historically occupied by defunct industries including a barrel making facility, lumber mills, fertilizer storage, an agricultural supply store, and a bulk petroleum facility. Beaufort County intends to transform the site into a recreational destination with climate-resilient vacation rentals and a marina to foster ecotourism. Although the site was donated to the Town, due to a lack of resources, they have been unable to assess the site’s environmental risks for redevelopment. This area is non-metropolitan.

PS4 The Wooten Property: The City of Rocky Mount (a HUD-designated metropolitan area located about 50 miles east of Raleigh) is a long-standing partner with DEQ in brownfields redevelopment. Historically, Rocky Mount’s once-booming economy was driven by tobacco and a prosperous cotton/textile industry. At a prominent entrance to the City is the Robert Wooten property (1133 Cokey Rd.), a 6-acre abandoned site in a neighborhood with a high concentration of poverty, deteriorated housing stock, and a majority African American population with a history of marginalization in the area. The property was occupied most recently by Wooten Marine for the repair and salvage of boats. Today, the property lies vacant with two dilapidated warehouses, discarded boats, and overgrown vegetation. There is a local movement on the part of the City to alleviate food deserts, and they view this property as perfectly situated for redevelopment that would address this community need. Evaluating the Wooten property using this grant would assist in the environmental risk evaluation and eventual reuse of a long-standing blighted property through expansion of a local neighboring business.

PS5 The Pembroke Bulk Oil Plant: Founded in 1895, the Town of Pembroke is within Robeson County along the Lumber River and within an area that sees significant pass-through traffic from major metropolitan areas in the western portion of the state to coastal destinations. This area is also home to the Lumbee Tribe. The Town has a population of 2,973 within a county of persistent



poverty. During the 2010 census, the poverty rate was measured at over twice the average for the State. Due to its limited population and persistent poverty, the Town of Pembroke has limited resources for civic projects. Pembroke has the opportunity to acquire three parcels comprising the former Pembroke Bulk Oil facility downtown between S. Jones and Blaine Streets to develop a new civic building to house town offices, a judicial room, and gymnasium to also serve as an extreme weather shelter. The facility previously distributed petroleum and herbicide/pesticide products, and environmental releases of both have been documented. The Town of Pembroke is seeking a Brownfields Agreement from DEQ to facilitate safe redevelopment of the property. However, funds are needed to complete environmental assessment that will make this redevelopment feasible. This area is non-metropolitan.

1.b. Revitalization of the Target Area

1.b.i. Reuse Strategy and Alignment with Revitalization Plans

PS1 Nikwasi Cultural Corridor: Much like the ECBI, the historic Nikwasi Mound has become a victim to a previous lack of cultural sensitivity, first with the siting of petroleum distribution facilities adjacent to the Mound, and second by road improvements into the Town of Franklin surrounding the mound, making access to this historic site difficult and depressing. The ECBI and Town of Franklin have plans for a public cultural center³, which would also have access to the Little Tennessee River Greenway. The environmental assessment of properties along the Nikwasi Cultural Corridor would significantly advance the community's goal of preserving the Cherokee heritage in the area, expanding the cultural corridor, and eventually connecting this area with other tribal lands.

PS2 Smoot Tannery: The Town of North Wilkesboro has identified the Smoot Tannery property as optimal for reuse as community recreational and greenspace; which cannot be advanced until the Town acquires the property. After assessment, the Town intends to acquire the property in order to demolish the dilapidated structures and remove the community hazards that the industrial buildings pose. The Town aims to offer residents and nearby disadvantaged communities greater access to greenspace and physical activity opportunities by revitalizing the space into lighted recreational fields, greenway connector trails, and preserving the historic tannery smokestack.

PS3 Beaufort Marine Park: Redevelopment of the former industrial area along the Pungo River into a marine park would allow climate-resilient revitalization of this area with economic benefits in accordance with County goals. Although the amount of the funding has not yet been determined, the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) committed to the Town of Belhaven in July 2021 to fund the design and construction of a water-access area here.

PS4 The Wooten Property: The Wooten Property, located within a disadvantaged area of Rocky Mount, has a great need of affordable housing, jobs, and access to grocery stores/fresh foods. The City has evaluated options in this area including food production, manufacturing, or urban gardening. The City's priority for this Site would be to determine environmental risk and conduct further outreach to complete a redevelopment plan to meet the needs of the area.

PS5 The Pembroke Bulk Oil Plant: The Pembroke Bulk Oil facility has been identified by the Town as ideal for the civic building mentioned above. The Town would use assessment funding afforded by the brownfields grant to obtain a brownfields agreement with DEQ that will remove the environmental liability hurdles to this redevelopment.

1.b.ii. Outcomes and Benefits of Reuse Strategy

PS1 Nikwasi Cultural Corridor: The outcome of this assessment opportunity will be the acquisition of approximately 4 acres of land within the Corridor that is included in the 2020

³ <https://wlos.com/news/local/ideas-considered-for-upgrading-nikwasi-mound-promoting-cherokee-culture>



Franklin Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The land will become part of site access improvements and the preservation of the area's rich cultural history.

PS2 Smoot Tannery: The completion of assessment on the Smoot Tannery will allow the Town of North Wilkesboro to define the highest and best use of the property for the community and to remove the dilapidated building from the view and psyche of nearby disadvantaged communities.

PS3 Beaufort Marine Park: The completion of the Beaufort Marine Park will enable access to subsistence and commercial fishing and other maritime recreational uses, provide jobs, and equitable access to the waterfront as well as a viable economic boost from ecotourism for the Town of Belhaven and Beaufort County.

PS4 The Wooten Property: Adding commercial opportunities at this prominent southern entrance to Rocky Mount will provide local jobs for the community and foster community pride. A potential developer for this site is the Butterfield Company; a butter producer wishing to expand onto this property, that incorporates a philosophy of hiring local residents, including those who have served prison time for nonviolent offenses. Such expansion would not only improve the tax base but would provide income and sustainable employment that local residents (mostly minority) can easily access without a vehicle. The City has applied for \$48 million in grant funds from the US Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration to be applied to food desert mitigation, food production/distribution, urban agriculture, and test kitchens for use by small producers. If awarded, this funding would be complementary to Rocky Mount's vision of food equity and security as an economic development opportunity.

PS5 The Pembroke Bulk Oil Plant: The reuse of this former industrial property facilitated by this grant will provide the civic facility mentioned above for Robeson County residents. This county has not only suffered from persistent poverty, but also from increasingly extreme flooding from multiple storm events, such that the planned extreme weather shelter is a key component of resilience for this community. The Town of Pembroke has been awarded a \$5.2 million federal transportation grant under the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant that will be used for new multi-modal transportation improvements and increased interconnectivity infrastructure downtown to create a safer, more pedestrian-friendly area. Although funds will not be used directly on-site, infrastructure improvements will impact the property vicinity and create a leverage funding source to enhance the revitalization of the Pembroke Bulk Oil Plant environs.

1.c. Strategy for Leveraging Resources

The NC DEQ Brownfields Program will leverage EPA Assessment funds to conduct assessment and complete Brownfields Agreements with partner communities. A Brownfields Agreement is based on an evaluation of environmental risk and land use restrictions (LURs) for the safe reuse of the property; it also provides environmental liability protection and tax incentives that attract private developers. Individually, these small, disadvantaged communities are not able to offer these types of incentives that facilitate developers' private sector dollars;

1.c.i. Resources Needed for Site Reuse

The details of the funding available and key resources for site reuse are in the table below.

| Priority Site | Eligible Funding Opportunities |
|------------------|---|
| Nikwasi Corridor | Positioned for foundational, corporate, and private investments to facilitate land acquisition and construction once environmental risk is quantified. According to estimates by Mainspring Conservation, the cultural corridor has over \$410,000 invested in assessment, land purchases, preservation, and redevelopment efforts in the Corridor. |



| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Smoot Tannery | As per negotiations with Wilkes County, the Town of North Wilkesboro will acquire the property following evaluation of environmental impacts and liability determination at nominal cost to the Town. Once municipally owned, additional grant sources are available. |
| Beaufort Marine Park | Assessment will allow the Town to quantify construction costs to safely redevelop the Site into a marine park, in part with NCWRC funding. |
| Wooten Property | Assessment is necessary to evaluate the risks associated with past property uses and the need for additional actions to market for beneficial reuse. |
| Pembroke Bulk Oil Plant | Funds available to purchase following assessment; additional funding sources will be sought following purchase for building construction. |

1.c.ii. Use of Existing Infrastructure

The details of existing infrastructure for each site are shown in the table below that will assist partner communities to capitalize on evaluation and reinvestment in the area:

| Priority Site | Infrastructure Present |
|----------------------|--|
| Nikwasi Corridor | Existing Greenway along Tennessee River to connect to cultural corridor. |
| Smoot Tannery | Downtown location with utilities in-place, historic smokestack to be retained; dilapidated buildings to be demolished. |
| Beaufort Marine Park | Includes Pungo River frontage with canal/creek which, once dredged, is ready for a boat ramp. Parking lot present which will need expansion. |
| Wooten Property | Existing utilities in place, potential for building reuse to be determined. |
| Pembroke Oil Plant | Existing utilities in place, buildings demolished and site ready for new structures. |

2. Community Need and Community Engagement

2.a. Community Need

2.a.i. The Community's need for funding Each of our priority sites is located within a small community of limited means with an average ~60% of households that are low income and non-metropolitan community partners average a population of 3,188 (refer to Section 2.a.ii(3)). While partner communities are staffed with employees dedicated to area revitalization, resources and capability are often limited, and the effort required to manage an entire EPA grant is burdensome for these low-capacity communities. The State has the capacity to manage these funds for their efficient use, and our community engagement with partners listed below ensures local input in site selection. Environmental assessment conducted with these grant funds would act as a catalyst for property acquisitions and land redevelopment to strengthen economic growth of the area. Additional benefits could include increased recreation, alleviation of food deserts, and removal of abandoned buildings which all serve to bolster community morale. The NC Brownfields Program has a strong record of working directly with developers and community partners to bring upfront endpoint thinking to these assessments, and put institutional controls in place that enable redevelopment at contaminated properties. Our State's philosophy is to locate and engage developers from the start to maximize real brick and mortar redevelopment potential. Our success with this approach is self-evident with over \$25 billion in redevelopment investment in brownfields to date.

2.a.ii. Threats to Sensitive Populations

2.a.ii(1). Health or Welfare of Sensitive Populations

PS1 Nikwasi Cultural Corridor: Two existing petroleum distribution Brownfields Properties are located within the Nikwasi Cultural Corridor, which have contributed to shallow impacts that could be exposed during redevelopment or greenway construction. This grant will assist to



characterize the impacts present and define institutional controls or remediation efforts necessary to ensure the safe reuse of properties.

PS2 Smoot Tannery: The former Smoot Tannery building is in a state of significant dilapidation and poses a risk to any visitors and nearby recreation areas. The physical hazards are compounded with environmental risks from former site operations, including possible fugitive emissions of asbestos containing materials. These hazards must be assessed and addressed to reduce the current threat posed to the Town and those proposing to redevelop the site.

PS3 Beaufort Marine Park: The Beaufort Marine Park Property currently sits vacant and unsecured with structural remnants present. Based on the industrial history, unknown environmental risks, and proximity to waterways and underserved communities, the property poses an exposure risk that additional funding is needed to quantify.

PS4 The Wooten Property: The deteriorating condition of the buildings pose human safety risks on this unsecured property, which are compounded with potential environmental impacts from former onsite and nearby offsite operations. The risks of this site would be quantified through use of the EPA assessment grant funds. This is threshold to any redevelopment.

PS5 The Pembroke Bulk Oil Plant: Currently consisting of vacant land, the former Pembroke Bulk Oil Plant could pose safety risks to visitors or trespassers on the unsecured property from known former petroleum and pesticide storage releases. This grant would assist to define environmental risks to site redevelopment.

2.a.ii(2). Greater than Normal Incidence of Disease and Adverse Health Conditions

Based on the NC DEQ Environmental Justice Screening Tool, the information below is provided per area in the vicinity of the Priority Sites and is compared with the State average. It includes county level data from the 2017 5-year estimate of the American Community Survey (ACS) and from the NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS). The prevalence of these adverse health conditions speak to environmental hazards that have not been identified in the vicinity of each priority site, for which this EPA Assessment Grant would assist in evaluating.

| Priority Site | Cancer Rate ¹ | Asthma Hospitalizations | Child Mortality | Pre-Term Birth |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| PS 1: Nikwasi | 166.7 | 17 | 67.95 | 9.5 |
| PS 2: Smoot Tannery | 175.5 | 38 | 64.9 | 11.2 |
| PS 3: Beaufort Marine Park | 195.7 | 27 | 97.75 | 10 |
| PS 4: Wooten Property | 187.4 | 133 | 69.55 | 10.6 |
| PS 5: Pembroke Bulk Oil | 191.7 | 267 | 97 | 10.8 |
| State Average | 169.1 | 90 | 57.8 | 10 |

1. Average deaths caused by cancer; 2. For 2011-2015, Per 100,000

2.a.ii(3). Promoting Environmental Justice

Though each priority site is situated within a community with a strong cultural history of resilience, each has been uniquely overburdened and underserved throughout its history, as shown in the table below. Whether it was the Cherokee, displaced from their ancestral homeland on the Trail of Tears or the communities in the eastern part of the State that have seen economic decline along with increased extreme weather events resulting in persistent recovery hardships increasing poverty and unemployment rates. The administration of this grant to community partners would meet the Justice40 Initiative goals of remediation and reduction of legacy pollution and assist in development of community infrastructure and recreation facilities. DEQ also proposes to advance community partnerships with Native Tribes in locating additional sites.



| Priority Site | Low-Income (%) ¹ | Minority (%) ¹ | Town Population ³ | Other |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Nikwasi | 62.25 | 13.09 | 3,845 | ECBI Tribal Significance |
| Smoot Tannery | 71.15 | 30.79 | 4,245 | Within floodplain |
| Beaufort Marine Park | 33.07 | 50.51 | 1,688 | Decline in industry; within floodplain |
| Wooten Property | 70.33 | 82.48 | 57,477 | Persistent Poverty County ² |
| Pembroke Bulk Oil | 65.33 | 82.87 | 2,973 | Persistent Poverty County ² |

1. Source: American Community Survey; 2. Source: Congressional Research Service; 3. From 2010 Census

2.b. Community Engagement

2.b.i. Project Involvement; 2.b.ii Project Roles;

NC DEQ Brownfields has partnerships with the following communities for priority sites; other community partners not listed in detail include the Carolinas Gateway Partnership, the Town of Fairmont, Hertford County, High Country Council of Governments (COG), City of Kinston, Land of Sky COG, Lenoir County, Lumber River COG, Martin County Economic Development Corporation, Town of Maxton, Southwestern Commission COG, and Upper Coastal Plain COG.

| Name of Organization/Entity/Group | Point of Contact (name, email, & phone) | Specific Roles* |
|---|---|-----------------|
| Target Area 1 - Appalachian Region | | |
| Mainspring Conservation Trust www.mainspringconserves.org | Ben Laseter, Deputy Director, blaseter@mainspringconserves.org 828.524.2711 | 1,2 |
| Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians ebci.com/ | Mike LaVoie, michlavo@nc-chokeee.com , 828.359.6113 | 1,2 |
| Town of North Wilkesboro north-wilkesboro.com/ | Wilson Hooper, Town Manager 336.667.7129 townmanager@north-wilkesboro.com | 1,2 |
| Target Area 2 - Northeast Coastal Plain | | |
| Beaufort County Economic Development co.beaufort.nc.us | Martyn Johnson, Director, martyn.johnson@beaufortedc.com , 252.946.3970 | 1,2 |
| City of Rocky Mount rockymountnc.gov | Brad Kerr, Director of Public Works, brad.kerr@rockymountnc.gov , 252.972.1121 | 1,2 |
| Mid-East Commission COG mideastcom.org | Kevin Richards, Planning, Economic Development & Community Services, krichards@mideastcom.org , 252.974.1823 | 1,2 |
| Town of Belhaven, townofbelhaven.com | Lynn Davis, Town Manager, ldavis@townofbelhaven.com , 252.943.3055 | 1,2 |
| Target Area 3- Lumber River Basin | | |
| Town of Pembroke pembrokenc.com | Tyler Thomas, Town Manager, tyler@pembrokenc.com , 910.521.9758 | 1,2 |



| Statewide Partners | | |
|--|--|---|
| Development Finance Initiative (DFI), dfi.sog.unc.edu | Eric Thomas ethomas@sog.unc.edu , 919.433.6914 | 3 |
| North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, ncwildlife.org | Gary Gardner, Engineering Div Chief, NC Wildlife Resources Commission, 919.707.0010 | 4 |
| EPA Office of Research and Development (ORD) | Meridith Fry, Integrated Environmental Assessment Branch, Fry.Meridith@epa.gov ; 202.564.5129 | 5 |

* **Specific involvement Code:** 1. Facilitation of Site Selection and redevelopment planning; 2. Community Outreach and cultural liaison; 3. Enhancing redevelopment partnerships and providing development visioning services; 4. Project Funding; 5. Partnership with EPA ORD to submit FY22 proposal through Regional-ORD Applied Research Program (ROAR) program to conduct geospatial mapping of disadvantaged communities vulnerable to storm events.

Another critical outreach initiative is the continuation of a DEQ survey of municipalities that commenced in the Summer of 2021. The NC DEQ Brownfields Program hired a student intern to update outreach materials within the Program, including developing this survey to reach a greater community of stakeholders and to steer the direction of the NC DEQ Brownfields Program outreach efforts. Communities will help identify critical needs that the Program can address. The internship program will continue in the Summer of 2022 with a focus on developing partnership arrangements for the upcoming grant award years.

2.b.iii. Incorporating Community Input:

This Assessment Grant will allow identification of Brownfields Properties to bring assessment, development, and economic investment to these neglected communities through the Statewide Brownfields Initiative. DEQ will continue to employ its own brownfields resources outside of the grant budget to work with community partners in support of area wide planning activities in conjunction with this grant. This resource leveraging will also include a review of properties with environmental concerns from such sources as listings with the DEQ's Inactive Hazardous Sites Branch (IHSB) or Underground Storage Tanks (UST) Program. DEQ will work to ensure that Community partners will connect with redevelopment agencies such as DFI, Carolinas Gateway Partnership, Main Street Communities, and the Governor's Hometown Strong program for additional planning assistance.

3. Task Descriptions, Cost Estimates, and Measuring Progress

3.a.i. Project Implementation; 3.a.ii. Anticipated Project Schedule; and 3.a.iv. Outputs:

Task activities, schedules, and expected outputs are outlined in the table below.

| Task 1 Cooperative Agreement Project Management | | |
|--|--|--|
| Activities | Schedule | Output |
| 1. Coordinate, manage, and track grant activities; 2. Prepare fact sheets and other educational materials for outreach; 3. Track progress and update ACRES; 4. Prepare Quarterly Reports and other grant-related documentation; | 1st Quarter (Q) Prepare all documents for contracting process. Quarterly Report. Update ACRES. 2nd Q - duration of grant as needed (AN) Coordinate contractor(s) interviews and | 1. 20 Quarterly Reports 2. ACRES updates 3. Attendance at National Brownfields Conferences and |



| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>5. Manage project budget/ output;</p> <p>6. Prepare Requests for Proposals (RFPs)/engage contractors; and</p> <p>7. Engage up to 2 staff for National Brownfields Conference/Region 4 Meeting of States and Tribes, etc.</p> | <p>selection process. Quarterly Report. Update Acres.</p> <p>3rd Q- AN Coordinate assessment activity. Attend conferences/workshops. Quarterly Report. Update ACRES.</p> | <p>Region 4 Meetings of States and Tribes</p> |
| Task II: Community Engagement | | |
| <p>1. Conduct outreach;</p> <p>2. Attend meetings to provide guidance and set goals for community site selection;</p> <p>3. Assist communities to look toward future brick and mortar redevelopments for site selections including involving business leaders and lenders in site selection and focusing on what it takes to get to “Yes” on site loans.</p> <p>4. Determine need for procuring interpretation and translation services;</p> <p>5. Update outreach and media materials, arrange EJ Tool presentations, EPA Vulnerability Tool resiliency presentations; and</p> <p>6. Solicit local and regional prospective developers for involvement.</p> | <p>2nd Q – AN Continue outreach for partner communities and other communities within Target Areas; encourage steering committee development and additional site selection.</p> | <p>1. 20 Community meetings, in-person or online</p> <p>2. 10 Named Steering Committees consisting of local leaders</p> <p>3. Outreach materials including factsheets, presentations, and EJ tool summaries)</p> <p>4. Updated website and social media postings</p> |
| Task III: Environmental Assessments | | |
| <p>1. Prioritize and select sites within target areas, with focus on priority sites;</p> <p>2. Prepare site eligibility forms and access agreements;</p> <p>3. Task contractor(s) to complete Phase I ESAs, with AAI Checklists;</p> <p>4. Engage contractor(s) to complete Site-Specific Quality Assurance Project Plans (SSQAPPs) for Phase II ESAs; and</p> <p>5. Oversee selected contractor(s) completion of Phase II ESAs.</p> <p>6 Update ACRES.</p> | <p>1st Q – 4th Q Prepare site eligibility forms and access agreements of priority sites</p> <p>4th Q – 16th Q Identify and prioritize sites with partner communities. Prepare site eligibility forms, access agreements</p> <p>4th Q – 14th Q Complete Phase I ESAs and associated AAI Checklists on priority sites with later focus on additional sites selected.</p> <p>8th Q – AN Complete SAP-QAPPs and Phase II ESAs on priority sites and additional selected sites.</p> | <p>1. Site inventory list for all Communities by Target Area;</p> <p>2. Site eligibility forms and access agreements;</p> <p>3. 40 Phase I ESAs, with AAI Checklists, in accordance with ASTM E1527-13;</p> <p>4. 20 SSQAPPs & 20 Phase II ESAs.</p> <p>5. 10 SSQAPPs for Extended Vapor Intrusion Phase II ESAs</p> |

| Task IV: Reuse Planning/Communication | | |
|---|---|--|
| Communicate with project stakeholders for future actions, including options for brownfields agreements, risk communication, redevelopment partner connections, and additional grant referrals to encourage redevelopment. | 8th Q – AN Conduct stakeholder sessions in support of community vision and redevelopment. | Project follow up status reported in 20 quarterly reports and ACRES Updates. |

3.a.iii. Task/Activity Lead(s):

The NC DEQ Brownfields Program will lead all tasks, and the lead project manager will be Ms. Jordan Thompson, with assistance from Ms. Kathleen Markey. The qualifications of the key Brownfields Program Staff are provided below in Section 4.a.i.

3.b.i – 3.b.iii: Cost Estimates 3.b.i. Development of Cost Estimates; 3.b.ii. Application of Cost Estimates; 3.b.iii. Funds Allocated Towards Environmental Site Assessments

Estimated budget and cost categories are outlined below:

| Budget Categories | | Project Tasks | | | | Total |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------|-------------|----------|-------------|
| | | Task I | Task II | Task III | Task IV | |
| Direct Costs | Personnel | 25,997 | 194,979 | 25,997 | 12,999 | 259,972 |
| | Fringe Benefits | 10,597 | 79,476 | 10,597 | 5,298 | 105,968 |
| | Travel | 5,000 | 25,000 | 5,000 | | 35,000 |
| | Equipment | | - | - | - | - |
| | Supplies | - | 5,000 | 8,704 | - | 13,704 |
| | Contractual | - | 50,000 | 1,500,000 | | 1,550,000 |
| | Other | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total Direct Costs | | 41,594 | 354,455 | 1,550,298 | 18,297 | 1,964,644 |
| Indirect Costs | | \$3,536 | \$26,517 | \$3,536 | \$1,767 | 35,356 |
| Total Budget | | \$45,130 | \$380,972 | \$1,553,834 | \$20,064 | \$2,000,000 |

For all tasks, grant funding represents 0.75 FTE. The remainder of an anticipated 0.25 FTE will be funded by the NC Brownfields Program.

Task I – Cooperative Agreement Oversight: *Personnel:* Travel: Airfare/lodging/per diem costs for 1 staff estimated at \$1,000.00 per person. Supplemental travel costs beyond this will be shared by the NC brownfields program fee receipts fund as needed.

Task II – Community Outreach: *Personnel:* *Supplies:* Costs are associated with 5 years of IT hardware (2 laptops @ \$1600 each, 2 monitors @\$150 each, docking station@\$110, webcam at \$50, for total of total \$3,660). Other supplies related to graphics and software expected to make up remainder of total. *Contractual:* Estimated 16 hrs at \$100/hr for EC to attend 25 outreach events (not needed at all events) for a total of \$40,000; translation/interpretation services (to be procured by EC) for 80 hrs of meetings at \$125/hr (\$10,000). Documents/factsheets will be translated for non-English speakers by NC DEQ staff as an in-kind service.

Task III – Environmental Assessments: *Personnel:* *Contractual:* Approx. 40 Phase I ESAs at \$2,500.00 each, 20 Phase II ESAs at \$40,000.00 each, and 10 resultant supplementary Vapor Intrusion Phase II ESAs at \$60,000 each, for a total of \$1,500,000. These estimates are based on previous experience with over 650 brownfields agreements regarding the percentage of sites that



need vapor intrusion sampling to clear barriers to financing. *Supplies:* Multiple continuous radon detectors and VOC detectors to be used to log radon and VOC levels indoors and outdoors to screen buildings for VI issues. **An estimated 75% of all grant funds will be directly spent on these Phase I & Phase II ESAs.**

Task IV –Reuse Planning/Communication: Personnel: *Personnel:* Contractual support not expected to be needed.

3.c. Measuring Environmental Results

Environmental results will be measured by completed assessments with partner communities and continued involvement with stakeholders to bring private development assets to bear, encouraging cleanup and mitigation as well as economic development and jobs. Other sites will be identified for potential EPA Cleanup Grants that will also positively impact the environment. This grant is a catalyst for pathways toward both an improved environment and economic development. NC DEQ Brownfields Program also stands ready to incentivize prospective developers via a brownfields agreement for liability protection and tax incentives that facilitate the financing of safe redevelopment. It is our goal that successful completion of this grant will lead to 20 or more of these sites to be evaluated and brought to productive reuse in these disadvantaged communities.

4. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

4.a. Programmatic Capability (20 points)

The NC Brownfields Program began in 1997 under the guiding hand of Mr. Bruce Nicholson, the current Program Manager. He has overseen its evolution to a redevelopment dynamo for North Carolina citizens. Sites are evaluated in accordance with statutory requirements to conduct site specific risk assessment and management, culminating in a Brownfields Agreement binding the State and developer in environmental compliance and economic development. Now in its 25th year, the Program has carried on its mission to protect the environment and public health, while being a catalyst for the economy and our communities, bringing over 650 underutilized, impacted properties back into productive reuse.

4.a.i. Organizational Capacity and 4.a.iii. Description of Key Staff: The NC DEQ Brownfields Program is currently staffed with 21 personnel. The majority are Project Managers, along with inspectors, GIS and administrative support staff. As determined by need, staff can be allocated to assist in this grant implementation for in-kind services.

Program Manager: The North Carolina Brownfields Program Manager is Mr. Bruce Nicholson. As an Environmental Engineering Supervisor, he has managed the Program since its inception in 1997, including the application for and management of the EPA 128(a) grant annually since first awarded in 2003, and Program fee receipts revenue from recorded Brownfields Agreements. Mr. Nicholson oversees all aspects of the program, from site assessment, brownfields agreement production, and land use restrictions stewardship including project managers, their supervisors, and specialty staff, such as the Division Vapor Intrusion Expert and site compliance inspectors.

Project Manager: General management of the grant activities will be conducted by Ms. Jordan Thompson, a Program Analyst and senior project manager for the Program. Ms. Thompson serves as the Program's local government and EPA Grant liaison and works extensively with U.S. EPA Region 4 Brownfields staff as well as local governments in support of their brownfields grant activities. With prior consulting experience, she will supervise contractor activities under this grant. Ms. Thompson has previously applied for and received a small community assistance grant for the Town of Mayodan which provided funding for planning assistance on their brownfields project.



Project Assistant: Kathleen Markey will assist Ms. Thompson, particularly in eastern North Carolina as EPA liaison to grantees. Ms. Markey is a skilled site eligibility coordinator for the Program and has advanced into project management responsibilities.

Legal Advisor: The NC DEQ Brownfields Program has access to two attorneys who are employed by the NC DEQ and who are assigned to address legal issues for the Program. **Financial Manager:** Leslie Aycock has 26 years of accounting and budget management experience and is currently the NC DEQ Division of Waste Management's Budget Officer. Ms. Aycock and her team will provide budgeting and expenditure information for management of the grant and for inclusion in quarterly and annual reports to EPA.

4.a.ii. Organizational Structure: Timely, successful expenditure of funds will be accomplished through the existing organizational structure of the Brownfields Program when selecting priority sites, engaging contractors, and engaging partner communities with redevelopment teams and/or facilitating completion of Brownfields Agreements.

4.a.iv. Acquiring Additional Resources: The Brownfields Program will administer grant funds on behalf of partner communities where need is identified with preference given to disadvantaged and environmental justice areas. Upon grant award, Brownfields will issue a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to contractors for the life of the grant cycle. It is anticipated that at least two (2) and no more than three (3) contractors will be selected to complete environmental assessment at the direction of the Brownfields Program and with input from the communities on selected properties. Contractors will work at the direction of the NC Brownfields Program to scope and complete approved assessment as necessary to evaluate environmental risks, define redevelopment potential, and record NC Brownfields Agreements.

4.b. Past Performance and Accomplishments

4.b.i. Currently Has or Previously Received an EPA Brownfields Grant: DEQ Brownfields has received (and efficiently used) 128(a) grant funds every eligible year since the inception of the federal brownfields law in 2002.

4.b.i(1). Accomplishments: DEQ Brownfields has created a highly successful Brownfields Program that has leveraged their annual EPA 128(a) grant into a program that has recorded over 650 Brownfields Agreements and garnered over \$25 billion in private sector brownfields development investment over its 25 years of operation.

4.b.i(2). Compliance with Grant Requirements: NC DEQ has specialized expertise with brownfields and effectively utilizes its federal funding. The DEQ Brownfields Program has a history of compliance and efficient performance on its 128(a) State Assistance Grant. The Program has not only fully utilized its grant funding, it has developed a strong fee funding system that has fostered long term stability and growth. DEQ uses existing 128(a) funds to employ ~8.5 FTEs and its program fee receipts from developers to fund another 16.5 FTEs. The Program is much sought after by lenders and other stakeholders across the state to facilitate redevelopment projects. Outputs exceed goals routinely, and hundreds of construction completions have resulted from the 650+ brownfields agreements the program has produced. North Carolina also leads in stewardship of institutional controls through the creation of its property management unit to ensure compliance. These innovations, along with compliant semiannual reporting on the 128(a) grant activities/ accomplishments and attendance at all State/Tribal 128(a) Regional meetings enhances our strong relationship with EPA Region 4. The Program plans on using significant staff resources from these 2 funding sources to efficiently manage this assessment grant to further redevelopment and economic recovery in underserved partner communities. Past performance on 128(a) funding indicates that grant funds will be efficiently and completely spent.

